

VII. TRANSPORTATION

Roadways

Business Route 7 (Colonial Highway) is Hamilton's main street carrying most of the local traffic to and from Town. The Route 7 Bypass is intended to relieve some of the congestion in Town by carrying regional traffic around the Town. This major road serves the current and foreseen transportation needs of the Town.

The bypass serves the Town directly through a grade-separated interchange at Route 704, northeast of Town. The Route 704 interchange currently functions with generally good efficiency. Morning commuter traffic from the Town makes a left turn movement from Business Route 7 onto Route 704 heading north, meeting with relatively little westbound traffic that would interfere with the left turn movement. In the evening, commuters make right turn movements onto Route 7 into Town.

TABLE 7 Average Daily Trips (ADT) on Key Road Segments		
State Highway	Segment	ADT
Rt. 7 Bypass	Rt. 287 to Rt. 704	26,000
Rt. 7 Business	Rt. 704 to Clarke's Gap	5,200
Rt. 704	Rt. 7 Business Ramp to Rt. 7 Bypass	3,000
Rt. 709 (south)	Rt. 722 to Rt. 726	160
Rt. 709 (south)	Rt. 726 to Rt. 710	460

Source: 2001 Virginia Department of Transportation Daily Traffic Volumes

The amount of growth projected in the Hamilton planning area has been recently scaled down considerably from earlier plans. The "Southern Collector Road," a planned facility that was identified in the County's 1991 Choices and Changes: General Plan, is no longer needed to accommodate projected traffic in the Hamilton area. Consequently, the southern collector was removed from the County's planning documents including the Revised General Plan and the Revised Countywide Transportation Plan. The Route 7 Bypass will continue to serve the transportation needs of the expanding populations. Regional transportation policy considerations as well as local traffic calming measures are needed to ensure that Hamilton streets do not end up facilitating regional, cut-through traffic.

Transportation planning for the Town must take into consideration the safety of everyone using the streets—pedestrians, motorists, schools and commuter buses, cyclists, children, and farm vehicles. Currently, pedestrians and bicyclists are not able to move safely on some of the local streets because of high levels of traffic and speeding problems on the local through streets, and the inadequacy of the existing sidewalks/trails network.

Non-obtrusive means of safely controlling and moving traffic, such as using changes in pavement or texture of roadway, speed “humps”, landscaping and historic feature signs similar to those identified in the Route 50 Traffic Calming Plan should be considered. Traffic calming, improved enforcement of current speed limits, and continued promotion of available public transport buses are among the strategies that could help to improve transportation safety.

The Town has recently received a TEA-21 grant from the Virginia Department of Transportation to make improvements to the transportation system within the corporate limits at select locations. The grant was awarded to construct raised crosswalks as one means to address traffic calming. Grant money will also be used to improve accessibility with the provision of sidewalk ramps that conform with American Disability Act requirements. Lastly, the project will include the provision of signage at the east and west gateways of the Town. The Town is planning to begin these projects in 2003.

Policy direction in this Plan promotes the center of the Town of Hamilton for commercial revitalization of property currently zoned for commercial use. As a part of this initiative, it will be necessary to address the inadequate parking conditions that currently exist.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

The Town and the County are placing a high priority on bicycle and pedestrian network planning. The Town has established a citizen’s committee to advise the Town Council on non-vehicular transportation issues. The County is currently in the process of developing a countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan. These Town and County planning efforts will be coordinated and will emphasize the bicycle and pedestrian trail opportunities that exist within the Town and surrounding JLMA.

One important link in the regional bicycle and pedestrian system is the Washington and Old Dominion Regional Trail. The W&OD Trail is a recreational facility owned and operated by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. It connects Alexandria with Purcellville and points in between with a paved hiking/bicycle trail within the right-of-way of the former Washington and Old Dominion Railroad. It passes to the north of Hamilton, roughly parallel with the Route 7 Bypass. An easement was recently obtained through a subdivision of property formally known as the Laycock Farm. When a trail is built within this easement, it will serve as an important link between the W&OD Trail and the greater Hamilton community.

Bus Service

The Loudoun County Commuter Service currently provides commuter bus service between Hamilton and Washington D.C. Buses currently stop at the Hamilton Baptist Church where the parking lot serves as a park and ride lot. The commuter bus service is an important transportation service that takes cars off the road thereby helping to address Town and County objectives of achieving cleaner air standards and managing an adequate level of service on the major roadways in Loudoun County. The County will continue to work with the Town of Hamilton on providing this service to area residents and assessing future commuter needs in the area.

GOALS - TRANSPORTATION

1. Move vehicular traffic through present and future Town streets in a safe and orderly manner. Prevent Hamilton from becoming a “cut-through” for neighborhood traffic to and from other destinations.
2. Maintain the historic look and small-town character of Hamilton by maintaining and creating streets that are rural in nature (tree-lined and/or landscaped with safety features). New streets should be named to reflect the history of the Town.
3. Ensure that adequate access and parking is provided for new developments/businesses (especially those within the Town limits).
4. Provide for safe pedestrian and bicycle movement through the Town and JLMA by means of sidewalks/paths/trails that interconnect the Hamilton Community. Make the community pedestrian and bike friendly.
5. Design and locate new roadways so as to have minimal impact on existing residential areas.
6. Promote a safe and efficient transportation system (public, ride-sharing) serving residents, businesses and visitors while protecting the small-town character of the Town and surrounding areas.
7. The Town and the County will continue to support a commitment to public transportation and will work together to increase commuter bus service for the greater Hamilton community.

POLICIES - TRANSPORTATION

1. Provide and maintain pedestrian connections (sidewalks/paths/trails) that interconnect the major community features and residential neighborhoods in the Hamilton Community to support safe pedestrian and bicycle movement through the Town and JLMA.
2. Promote traffic calming as a non-obtrusive means of addressing/avoiding pedestrian and bicycle safety concerns, traffic noise, speeding problems and design concerns in existing as well as future neighborhoods.
3. Promote greater public awareness and participation in resolution of local transportation safety issues.
4. Ensure that all new roads, or improvements to existing roads, be designed to R2 or U2 sections, whichever is more appropriate, to maintain the small-town atmosphere. Road designed to R2 standards are generally shoulder and ditch sections while roads designed to U2 standards are typically curb and gutter sections that can include sidewalks.

5. The Town and the County will coordinate with VDOT to ensure that enough design flexibility is provided so that new roadways in the JLMA are compatible with the existing character of the Town in terms of pavement width, grade, building set-backs and landscaping.
6. The Town and County will coordinate with VDOT to ensure that all new roadways in the JLMA are planned and designed to:
 - a. terminate in other roadways
 - b. form interconnected grids that “flex” to fit the topography
 - c. respect natural and manmade features such as trees, fence lines, hedgerows, and stone walls
 - d. have few, if any, cul-de-sacs
 - e. maximize the convenience and comfort of the pedestrians and bicyclists

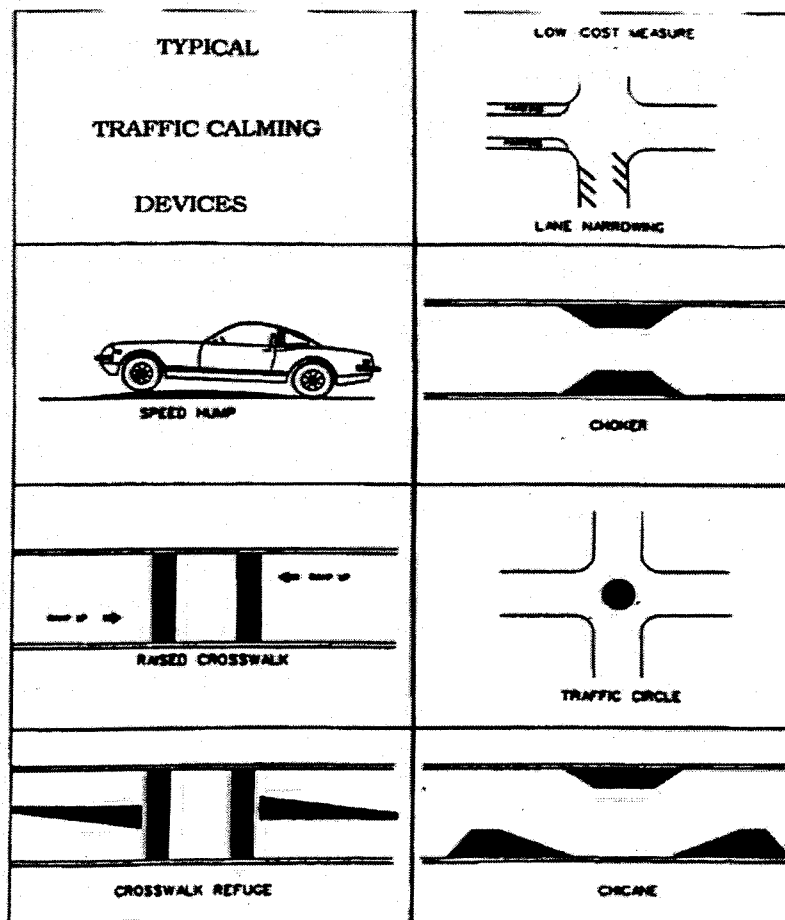
ACTION ITEMS – TRANSPORTATION

1. Implement traffic calming methods for Hamilton’s present and future streets, especially in trouble spots including, but not limited to, intersections on Business Route 7 at St. Paul Street and Hughes Street.
2. Develop and implement strategies (fines, “children at play” and “no through trucks” signs, citizen monitoring, public awareness campaigns) to encourage residents and visitors to follow traffic laws and enforcement measures, especially speed control.
3. Develop strategies in coordination with Loudoun County and VDOT to improve vehicle-hazardous intersections and roadways within the Town limits, as well as in the JLMA. In particular, address current or potential safety problems at the following locations.
 - a. Colonial Highway (Business 7) and S. St. Paul Street.
 - b. Colonial Highway (Business 7) and the offset intersection with 704 (Hamilton Station/Hamilton Church Roads).
 - c. Speed control issues on Hughes Street, St. Paul Street, Ivandale and Colonial Highway.
 - d. Ingress and egress from the West Colonial Highway junction associated with the new Harmony Middle School.
 - e. Ingress and egress from Hamilton Elementary School.




4. The Town and Loudoun County will work with Purcellville and VDOT to consider transportation policies and improvements that encourage through traffic to use Route 7 Bypass and Route 287, rather than Business Route 7 through Hamilton.
5. Implement an interconnected network of pedestrian connections throughout the Community, through the following steps.
 - a. Seek planning assistance from Loudoun County and the Commonwealth of Virginia to complete sidewalk repair/construction within Town as well as other pedestrian improvement projects.
 - b. Research and obtain grants to assist with completion of sidewalk repairs and new sidewalk construction within the Town.
 - c. Connect existing sidewalks/paths/trails by obtaining access easements from current residents to allow for those features across or through their property or street fronts.
 - d. The Town will amend ordinances to ensure that sidewalks, paths, or trails (whichever will reflect the nature of the area) which interconnect to existing pathways will be provided in new developments.
 - e. Provide sidewalks/paths/trails to both Hamilton Elementary and the new Harmony Intermediate School.
 - f. Provide access from the existing sidewalk network in the Town and JLMA to the W&OD Regional Trail.
 - g. Provide painted or alternate road surface crosswalks at several intersections near major destinations/features within and just outside of Town (elementary and intermediate schools, Town office, post office, public park, convenience store).
6. Establish a citizen's committee of volunteers under a Town Council Member's chairmanship to:
 - a. Monitor traffic safety;
 - b. Facilitate resolution of transportation-related concerns of citizens; and
 - c. Identify and implement strategies that address transportation-related issues, especially the policies and actions in this Plan.
7. Investigate the feasibility of constructing a "roundabout" at the intersection of Colonial Highway and St. Paul Street to facilitate traffic calming.
8. The Town, in coordination with the County, will work with VDOT to reduce minimum pavement widths for subdivision street standards and secondary road standards for new road projects.

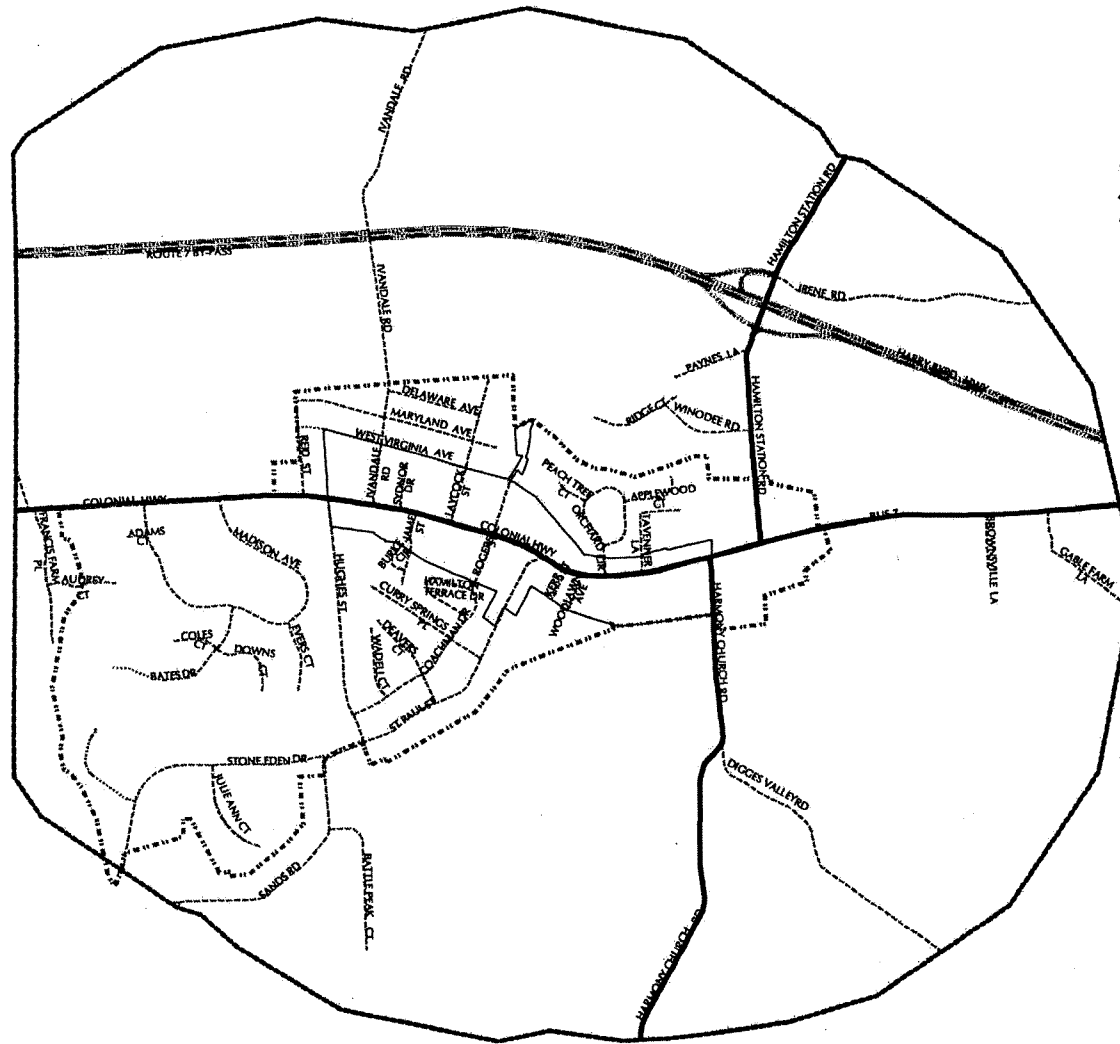
9. Revise the Town zoning ordinance to assure adequate access and parking for all development.
10. Develop strategies with local commercial property owners to improve parking amenities in the center of Town.
11. Name streets and public facilities after Hamilton historic events, public figures, and natural features.
12. Encourage use of public transportation with park-and-ride lots and ridesharing.
13. Enact an ordinance that prohibits on-street parking where appropriate.
14. Encourage designated pedestrian and bicycle lanes along roads.
15. Seek a reduction in the speed limit within the JLMA.
16. Assess the transportation needs of the Town and JLMA by conducting a comprehensive transportation study including determination of existing and projected traffic counts and intersection levels of service.




Source: Virginia Department of Transportation



Map 11
Road Network

County Transportation Plan Roads
 Major Collector(2 Lanes)
 Principal Arterial (Mult-Lanes)
 Local/Secondary Roads



 Town Boundary
 JLMA
 One Mile Subdivision Boundary

Comprehensive Plan
for the Town of Hamilton
and JLMA

